

REMARKS

Preliminary Matters

Applicant thanks the Examiner for considering the references cited in the Information Disclosure Statement concurrently filed with the application. Claims 1-9 are pending. Claims 1, 2, 4 and 6 have been amended herein. For the Examiner's convenience in addressing the outstanding objections and rejection, Applicants note that claims 1-3 are supported by Figs 1-11; claims 5 and 5 by Figs. 12-17; and claims 6-9 by Figs. 18-21.

Objection to the Drawings

The Examiner has objected to the drawings contending that the drawings fail to disclose the claimed first and second resin-molded division members and the joining portion recited in claim 1. Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection. Specifically, with reference to, for example, Figures 1-8, these figures clearly show the first resin-molded division member 21 and the second resin-molded division member 41. Further, the joining portion corresponds to the through holes 27 and 28 and the molten elastomer associated with the seal member 23 which flows into the through holes 27 and 28, as discussed, for example, on page 19, lines 1-18.

It appears that the Examiner is confused by the claimed joining portion. Specifically, the Examiner does not seem to appreciate which portion of the grommet corresponds to the claimed joining portion. As noted above, the joining portion corresponds to the through holes 27 and 28 as well as the molten elastomer of the seal member which flows into these holes to retain the seal member 23 to either the first resin-molded division member or the second resin-molded division

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member. Accordingly, Applicant has amended page 19 of the specification to make clear that the joining portion corresponds to these elements of the grommet.

Specification

The Examiner has objected to the specification as failing to provide antecedent basis for the claimed subject matter. This objection is related to the objection to the drawings.

Specifically, the Examiner contends that the specification does not provide support for the first and second resin-molded division members, the joining portion and the retaining portion recited in claims 1-9. As noted above, reference Nos. 21 and 22 respectively correspond to the claimed first division member and second division member. In addition, the holes 27 and 28 in conjunction with the molten elastomer of the seal member which flows into the holes corresponds to the claimed joining member. Further, the retaining member corresponds to reference numeral 47 in Figure 6 and reference numeral 154 in Figure 17. Each of these elements are thoroughly described in the specification. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection.

Rejections of Claims 1-5 Under § 112 (First Paragraph) as Failing to Provide an Enabling Disclosure.

The Examiner contends that claims 1-8 fail to provide an enabling disclosure of the invention recited in claims 1 and 4. Applicant respectfully disagrees for the follow reasons.

As noted above, the Examiner seems confused as to the identity of the joining portion recited in claim 1. Hopefully, the comments provided above and the amendments to the specification will clarify the matter to the Examiner. As explained above, the joining portion

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corresponds to the holes 27 and 28 provided in either the first division member or the second division member, in conjunction with the molten elastomer of the seal member 23 which flows into these holes to retain the seal member to the associated division member. This is discussed, *inter alia*, on page 19 of the application and is fully enabled by the specification.

With respect to claim 4, the waterproof rib recited therein corresponds to the rib identified by reference number 159 in the specification. *See* pages 27 and 28. Thus, the waterproof rib is fully described in the specification in a way that would enable a person of ordinary skill in the art to practice the invention recited in claim 4. Hence, Applicant traverses this rejection as well.

Rejection of Claims 1-3 and 6-9 Under § 112 (Second Paragraph) as being Indefinite

The Examiner has rejected claims 1-3 and 6-9 under § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite. With respect to claim 1, the Examiner contends that the recitation “the one resin-molded division member” is unclear and confusing.

To overcome this rejection, Applicant has amended claim 1 to recite “the at least one resin-molded division member” to more clearly indicate that the resin-molded division member referred to in this portion of the claim corresponds to the at least one division member on which the elastic seal member 23 is integrally formed, as recited in lines 9-11 of claim 1. For the benefit of the Examiner, Applicant submits that claim 1 requires that the elastic seal member be integrally formed on “at least one of the first and second resin-molded division members” and that the joining portion attaches the elastic seal member to the same “at least one resin-molded

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division member". Applicant respectfully submits that claim 1, as amended, clearly recites the invention in a way that is understandable to a person of ordinary skill in the art.

With respect to the rejection of claim 2, Applicant has amended claim 2 similarly.

As to the antecedent basis for "the elongated member" in claim 3, line 5, Applicant respectfully refers the Examiner to the preamble of claim 1 which recites "an elongated member."

With respect to the rejection of claim 6, Applicant has amended claim 6 to reference the "fixing member," rather than the "second retaining member."

Finally, with respect to the rejection of claim 9, Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection. Claim 9 clearly recites a retaining member which retains the first and second division members to each other and is directed to the embodiment of Figs. 18-21. This retaining member is, in fact, shown in the drawings and corresponds to reference number 217 and 229. Thus, Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection.

Rejection of Claims 4 and 5 under § 102(b) as being Anticipated by Sato et al (U.S. Patent 6,768,054)

Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection for the following reasons. In the rejection, the Examiner contends that reference numeral 21 corresponds to the claimed grommet and that reference numerals 30 and 32 correspond to the claimed waterproof rib. However, as shown in the drawings of Sato et al, reference numerals 30 and 32 correspond to endless ribs which are provided *on the cover or lid member 4; they are not provided on the grommet*. In contrast, claim 4 recites that *the grommet comprises a waterproof rib* which abuts against the peripheral wall

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portion of an upper edge portion of the box body which defines opposites ends of the notch opening portion. Thus, Sato et al clearly does not teach or suggest the claimed invention in which a grommet includes the claimed waterproof rib.

Rejection of Claims 1-3 under § 103(a) as being Unpatentable over Pulaski (U.S. Patent No. 6,218,625)

Claim 1 has been amended to clarify that the joining portion “attaches” the elastic seal member to the at least one resin-molded division member “so as to prevent separation therefrom.” In the rejection, the Examiner contends that reference numeral 22 (seal) corresponds to the claimed elastic seal member and that reference numeral 30 (connectors) corresponds to the claimed joining portion. However, these connectors 30 do not attach the seal 20 to the rigid members 16 (which the Examiner analogizes to the claimed first and second division members). Rather, the connectors 30 simply attach one outer member 16 to the other, as shown in Figure 1 of the reference.

Allowable Subject Matter

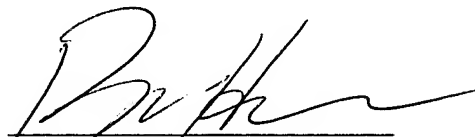
Applicant thanks the Examiner for indicating that claims 6-9 contain allowable subject matter.

In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

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The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,



Brian W. Hannon
Registration No. 32,778

SUGHRUE MION, PLLC
Telephone: (202) 293-7060
Facsimile: (202) 293-7860

WASHINGTON OFFICE

23373

CUSTOMER NUMBER

Date: May 31, 2005